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*The Writings of James Monroe*, including a Collection of his Public and Private Papers and Correspondence now for the first time printed. Edited by STANISLAUS MURRAY HAMILTON. Vol. I., 1778-1794. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1898. Pp. lxxv, 400.)

Down to the time when, at the age of forty-five, Monroe went to Paris to negotiate for New Orleans, he kept no letter-books and preserved copies of but few of his letters. The Monroe Papers in the possession of the Department of State include but a score of his letters anterior to 1800, and these are mostly of the period of his first mission to France. The present volume, a welcome addition to the handsome series of the "Writings of the Fathers," extends only to his departure upon that earlier mission. Accordingly the editor, an accomplished and painstaking official of the Bureau of Rolls and Library, has drawn from the Monroe Papers but two of the letters in the volume, and one of those, the long and important letter of August 12, 1786, to Patrick Henry, was presented to the Department by Mr. William Wirt Henry and has been printed in his life of his grandfather (II. 291). Mr. Hamilton has drawn his material almost wholly from the rich stores of the Jefferson and Madison Papers, also possessed by the Department. Out of 131 letters printed, 73 are letters to Jefferson (all but one of them from this source), and 47 are letters to Madison derived from the government's Madison Papers. Only ten, perhaps only nine, are derived from other sources than the manuscripts of the Department, and of these at least six have already been printed,<sup>1</sup> though the fact is not mentioned in any case save one.

Mr. Hamilton has placed historical scholars under obligations of such magnitude by his volume, and has, moreover, for so many years obliged with unfailing helpfulness all those who have had occasion to use the treasures from which the volume is drawn, that it seems ungracious to pause at this point and find fault. Yet two criticisms are inevitable, and fortunately they are of such a sort that they can without serious difficulty be met in the subsequent volumes of the series. In the first place, the source whence each letter is derived ought without fail to be indicated. This should surely be regarded as a fundamental rule in all editing of correspondence. If the letter has been printed before, the reader is entitled to know it. In the second place, a larger range of sources should be drawn upon. It is quite true that, down to 1803 at any rate, Monroe's letters to Jefferson and Madison are of much more consequence than any others. An industrious and sensible public functionary, neither brilliant nor original, he was their pupil (especially Jefferson's), leaned on them, sought their advice, and kept in constant touch with them.

<sup>1</sup> To Charles Lee, June 15, 1780, *Lee Papers*, III. 427; to Washington, August 15, 1782, *Correspondence of the Revolution*, III. 527; to R. H. Lee, December 16, 1783, May 24, 1786, Lee's *Lee*, II. 221, 224; to Governor Harrison, October 30, 1784, *William and Mary College Quarterly*; to Washington, April 8, 1794, Sparks, X. 557.

His letters to them from Congress, during the years 1784, 1785 and 1786, are on the whole the most valuable part of the collection. But there are not a few other existing letters, which have a considerable interest. Mr. Hamilton does not exclude from his scheme letters that have already been printed, and this is wholly proper, since so few of Monroe's letters have found their way into print. Now the letter of September 10, 1782, to Lord Stirling, printed in Duer's *Stirling*, p. 250; that of April 4, 1783, to Richard Henry Lee, printed in Lee's *R. H. Lee*, II. 225; that of February, 1784, to George Mason, in Miss Rowland's *Mason*, II. 68; that of April 20, 1786, to Jay, in Jay's *Correspondence*, III. 190; those of December, 1790, from Senator Monroe to the Governor of Virginia, in the *Virginia Calendars*, V. 229, 231, 414; and that of April 7, 1792, to Henry Lee, printed in the appendix to the latter's *Campaign of 1781*, p. xlvii, are all of interest, not to say of greater interest than some of the letters to Jefferson and to Madison. Of these last Mr. Hamilton has omitted almost none. He prints all but three or four of those possessed by the Department, a practice to which we should think he could hardly adhere in later volumes.

Of manuscript letters, too, there must be more in existence. The catalogue of the McGuire sale mentions twenty-eight, some of which fall within the period before 1794. The George Clinton papers at Albany contain many Monroe letters. The archives of the state of Virginia formerly contained a number of Monroe's letters from the Continental Congress to the governor of the state, one of which, at least, dealing partly with the Vermont controversy (1784), was of much interest and value. If the others have been lost, there is a copy of this among the Sparks Papers. In particular, it would have been gratifying if more letters of 1787 and 1788 could have been got together, from the treasures of autograph-hunters or otherwise.

But the volume as it stands is a most valuable possession, and a signal addition to our means of understanding the times to which it relates. It will be a long time before scholars will have exhausted all that can be derived from it. The editor has done his own work with conscientious care. The notes, which are not numerous, are well executed. The cipher passages in the letters ought all to have been deciphered. There is a table of contents, of the same clear and satisfying construction which has been used in the earlier issues of the series. A very well-conceived addition is that of "Annals of the Life of Monroe," which extend to some fifty pages, embracing not only biographical annals, but the substance, and often the text, of motions made by Monroe in deliberative bodies and of reports made by committees of which he was a member.

We cannot close without adverting to the light which the full publication of Monroe's letters of the years 1784-1788, to Jefferson and Madison, casts upon George Bancroft's literary methods. He makes use of nearly two-thirds of those letters in the appendixes to his *Formation and Adoption of the Constitution*, printing parts or, in a few cases, the whole letter. But they are almost always garbled. Garbled in the original

sense of the word, to be sure, not in its modern and worse sense. There is no evidence of intention to deceive ; but the text presented is a mosaic of sentences or passages picked out and run together, with no indication of omission. The result is sometimes misleading. For instance, Mr. Bancroft's process gives us, in one letter (I. 363) the following: "For four or five days past the qualification of the delegates from Rhode Island hath been the only subject before us. The question was, Shall a delegation retain its seat, or any particular member, the term of service having actually expired? The gentlemen wait for me." What Monroe really wrote was this (Hamilton, I. 27): "For four or 5 days past the qualification of the Delegates from R. I. hath been the only subject before us. The motion respecting them was from Mr. Read. This brought forward the report of the committee, which was against them and conformable to the principles established in the case of Delanson. Upon the question shall the resolution stand? 4 States voted in the affirmative, 2 in the negative and 3 were divided. Of course it was enter'd in the journals that it was lost. The question then was, are they under this vote delegates? On the side of those in the negative the arguments are: if 7 states were on the floor represented generally by but two members and the question was, shall a delegation retain its seat, or any particular member, the time of service having actually expir'd, the vote of one member only would keep him in Congress. 2. that," etc. This is quite a little different. Judging from internal evidence only, it is plain that Mr. Bancroft's text is in other respects considerably less correct than that of Mr. Hamilton (though "giving our own citizens a show," p. 87, is surely too modern ; Mr. Bancroft has "share").

The later volumes, dealing with transactions in which Monroe was more nearly the central figure, will be awaited with impatience. Some of them will lead us down into a field which sorely needs more abundant illustration. For the years after 1815 we have, to be sure, a good number of letters of Adams, Jefferson and Madison ; but they had now become spectators of the drama. We shall not see with clearness the faces and motions of the actors till we have editions of the correspondence of Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Calhoun, Jackson, Van Buren, Clinton, Tompkins, Crawford (if it be possible), and fuller sets of Clay and Webster. Mr. Hamilton has broken ground most acceptably in a great field.

*The Federalist: A Commentary on the Constitution of the United States*, by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. Edited, with notes, illustrative documents, and a copious index by PAUL LEICESTER FORD. (New York: Henry Holt and Co. 1898. Pp. lxxvii, 793.)

IN the preparation of this volume, Mr. Ford has had in view two distinct objects, a convenient working edition of *The Federalist* and a manual for the study of the history of the constitution of the United States. These objects are sufficiently dissimilar to render their combina-